

## Village school first joint U.S., Afghan project



*An Afghan child patiently waits to offer guests candy on a tray made especially for the ceremony Sunday.*

Story and photos by  
Pvt. 2 Terri Rorke  
*11<sup>th</sup> Public Affairs Detachment*

**JABEL O SARAJ, Afghanistan** — As Americans, our culture provides free education until reaching adulthood. School days are occupied with books, flash cards, field trips and eating cafeteria lunches, not to mention the series of subjects learned. This is familiar. But imagine not even knowing what a school is or ever seeing one.

The village of Jabel o Saraj has not had a school for more than 25 years. The last school known to the village was destroyed in the Soviet war.

History was made Sunday when ground was broken and stones were placed on the ground to signify where a school will be built for the village. The school will accommodate more than 600 students each day — 300 for morning classes and 300 in

the afternoon.

After a prayer was said Sunday from the Koran, the sign for the school was unveiled and key leaders gave speeches on the soon-to-be school grounds.

As the children crowded on the grounds of their future school, Col. Christopher P. Pritchett, Bagram Air Base commander, commended the villagers on their unity and spoke of pride and the positive future of the country.

“If we stay unified and we continue our friendship, tomorrow’s schools will be built completely by the Afghans. But what we will add to the future is America’s pride to see Afghanistan standing on its own feet.

“We’ve been building schools around the area for about the last year,” said Pritchett, as the crowd patiently waited for his interpreter’s translation.

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## PX parking lot expands to accommodate customers

By Pfc. Christina Carde  
*11<sup>th</sup> Public Affairs Detachment*

**BAGRAM, Afghanistan** — To enhance quality of life on Bagram Air Base, a project is underway to create easier and better access to the Post Exchange.

Due to the number of customers who go through the PX daily, the Facility Engineer Team has designed a plan to create more space and better organize parking outside the PX.

“This new parking lot will be much larger, more accessible, have a new driveway and allotted parking spaces with bumpers so people will know where to park their ve-

hicles,” said 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Joseph Murphy, executive officer, B Company, 527<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion, Ruston, La.

Even though construction has only been ongoing for about a week, there are already visible changes.

“We created a walkway from Disney Drive so troops don’t have to walk as far to access the PX,” said Murphy.

“We also have troops working daily applying a dirt foundation to prepare for the gravel,” he added.

Before any construction began on the new parking lot, a design had to be put together. Maj. Erwin Blancaflor, chief of designs, FET, Task Force Dragon, Combined

Joint Task Force-180, designed the new PX parking lot and said he has plans to take it further.

“If my design is followed and everything stays on schedule, the parking lot should be ready in two to three weeks,” said Blancaflor.

“However, I am trying to obtain approval from CJ-7(Engineering section) to switch the material that will be used for the parking lot from gravel to asphalt,” he said.

However, in a deployed environment, certain factors must be considered before asphalt is approved for a project.

————— See **LOT**, Page 5

# World News (Compiled from CNN.com)



*British soldiers stand under their squadron's colors Sunday while armor is added to their reconnaissance vehicles in Kuwait.*

## U.S. within 'striking distance' of U.N. support on Iraq

WASHINGTON — The United States is within "striking distance" of winning U.N. support for a possible war with Iraq, but the Bush administration is prepared to move against Baghdad without it, Secretary of State Colin Powell said Sunday.

A proposed U.N. Security Council resolution, introduced Friday by Britain, would give Iraq until March 17 to prove it has disarmed itself of weapons of mass destruction.

"If we get the vote, fine, then the international community is unified behind that effort," Powell told CNN.

"If we don't get the vote, the president then will have to make a judgment as to whether or not we're prepared now to lead a coalition of the willing to disarm [Iraqi President] Saddam Hussein," he added.

Powell said Sunday that the White House was "making some progress with the elected 10 members" of the Security Council toward winning support for the deadline.

"But as you know, the French have taken a strong position to oppose any new resolu-

tions," Powell said on CNN's "Late Edition with Wolf Blitzer."

"And although they haven't used the word 'veto,' they're certainly indicating that."

But Powell appeared optimistic, saying on "Fox News Sunday" that the administration was within "striking distance" of winning the nine votes needed on the 15-member Security Council.

## Powell: U.S., North Korea will 'eventually' talk

WASHINGTON — The United States will "eventually" talk with North Korea about the isolated communist nation's nuclear ambitions, but it will do so with the participation of other nations in the region, senior U.S. officials say.

U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell said on CNN's "Late Edition with Wolf Blitzer" that talking directly to North Korea would be a "bad practice" because the issue involved other nations in the region.

In recent months, the North has kicked out U.N. nuclear inspectors, pulled out of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, warned that it might drop out of an armistice that stopped the 1953 Korean War and test-fired a missile one day before South Korea's new president was inaugurated.

Washington said this month that North Korea had fired up a reactor believed capable of producing weapons-grade plutonium.

Pyongyang insists on a direct U.S.-North Korean dialogue.

Powell noted that the United States held direct talks with North Korea in 1994, when it signed the Agreed Framework treaty in which Pyongyang promised to halt its nuclear program.

## Report: Iran has 'extremely advanced' nuclear program

WASHINGTON — According to a *Time* magazine report, Iran has a nuclear program that is far more advanced than has been previously disclosed.

Citing unnamed diplomatic sources, *Time* says U.N. weapons inspectors have discovered that Iran's uranium-enrichment facility is "extremely advanced," to the point that it violates the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

On a visit last month to Iran, Mohamed ElBaradei, director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency, visited the facility designed to enrich uranium that Iran is building near Natanz.

But diplomatic sources quoted by *Time* say he found the plant much further advanced than previously believed. The sources say work on the plant is "extremely advanced," involves hundreds of gas centrifuges ready to produce enriched uranium and "the parts for a thousand others ready to be assembled."

## Erdogan may be Turkey PM

ISTANBUL, Turkey — Turkey's ruling party chief Tayyip Erdogan has won a by-election that clears the way for him to take over as prime minister.

Erdogan's election may also pave the way for a new vote in parliament on Washington's urgent request to deploy up to 62,000 troops in the NATO member ahead of a possible invasion of Iraq.

Erdogan, 49, and his Justice and Development Party (AKP), won in the southern town of Siirt with 84.7 percent of the final vote count. Speaking at a victory rally on Sunday night, Erdogan said he accepted the outcome of the by-election and thanked everyone for his victory.

## PX to celebrate anniversary

Bagram's Post Exchange will celebrate their one year anniversary here Tuesday.

The PX will have coffee and cake to celebrate the anniversary. Additionally, throughout the day anniversary specials will be offered.

There will be gift certificate drawings and giveaways of video games and movies. The PX will also offer a VIP pass in the drawings which will allow the recipient to cut in the front of the line. They will be offered for one month, two months and the duration of the tour. The passes are non-transferable.

# Nibbio Task Force carries out ISAF mission

By Maj. William Mott  
11<sup>th</sup> Public Affairs Detachment

**BAGRAM, Afghanistan** — Preceded by an advance planning team of 35 logistics and signal officers and soldiers, the Italian Nibbio Task Force has integrated into Operation Enduring Freedom.

Commanded by Brig. Gen. Giorgio Battisti, national contingent commander, Combined Joint Task Force-180 Nibbio will be deployed throughout Afghanistan from Forward Operating Base Salerno to Kabul and Bagram.

Battisti commands both the Italian International Security Agency Force and OEF troops to ensure unity of command and compliance with the mission of CJTF-180 and ISAF. “Our soldiers are all professional active duty and no longer conscript, and have all deployed to several other overseas missions,” said Battisti.

Col. Claudio Berto commands the paratroopers — Alpine mountain troops — known as Alpini, and units made up of explosive ordnance, nuclear biological and chemical, Carabinieri (Italian military police), medical, intelligence and light infantry special forces. They are the vanguard contingent of what is known as the Nibbio Task Force that was promised Sept. 2002 by the Italian Minister of Defense Antonio Martino.

After months of preparation, the advanced party planning team of liaison officers and signal soldiers laid down the supporting logistics and communications network to integrate the 1,000-strong task force into OEF.

Building a life support camp, preparing transportation for deployment and flights to complete the full task force were some of the major tasks the planning team and the 6<sup>th</sup> Transport Regiment and engineer team had to accomplish to successfully deploy the Nibbio Task Force.

“We did more than four months of training in the Dolomite Mountains of Northern Italy to prepare for this mission,” said Battisti.

Hundreds of soldiers were also deployed to Salerno from Bagram involving detailed coordination with the U.S. Army. The task



Photos courtesy of the Italian Nibbio Task Force

*Alpini soldiers practice patrol tactics at Bagram. The Italian forces did more than four months of mountain training preparing for the mission here.*

force can now execute its interdiction missions in the mountainous zones, patrol and surveillance, protection and security, and stabilization and assistance.

Nibbio is engaged in the War on Terror through missions into the Afghan mountains to prevent residual al-Qaida terrorists and followers of Osama bin Laden from returning to Afghanistan. Neutralizing residual terrorists for recognition and surveillance will keep the task force fully employed.

Unique to this close-combat operation is the deployment of five women members of the Alpini — one of whom is a parachutist. Women were just allowed into the Italian military three years ago. Now these female soldiers are the first Italian women to be deployed. More female troops are expected to join the unit throughout the deployment of the Alpini battalion. They have been deployed to maintain contact and interact with the women of Afghanistan whenever necessary.

The Italian Army's Folgore, Garibaldi,



*Alpini infantrymen practice an air assault from a helicopter.*

Sassari, and Friuli, Taureinense and Julia Brigades have, over the last decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, supported 10 world missions for peace enforcement, peacekeeping and combat operations.

Its paratroopers, Alpini rangers and heavy units have supported operations from Mozambique to Somalia, the Balkans to Eritrea and Kosovo to Afghanistan and as far off as East Timor.

“Nibbio represents a well trained force of senior leaders and seasoned soldiers who have on-the-ground experience from numerous deployments. They are prepared to de-



*Col. Christopher P. Pritchett, Bagram Air Base commander, speaks of unity and peace to the villagers in hopes that Afghanistan will continue to build its country as a nation friendly with the U.S.*

## SCHOOL, from Page 1

"The foundations were built with U.S. money. The walls were built with U.S. money. Today is symbolic because it demonstrates a change for (the) Afghan's future."

Pritchett's goal since his arrival April 2001 has been to unify the people in peace and rebuild their communities.

According to Pritchett, the inauguration of this school illustrates the first partnership project where Afghans and Americans are working together. The Afghans are using their money for their own reconstruction and the Americans are helping them in the process. In the past, they have been skeptical about giving up their salaries.

But because of an Afghan businessman and contractor, Mohammed Zayher, who has agreed to use his earnings and pay for 15 percent of the project, history is being made. Previously, he worked in construction at Bagram Air Base. Now he will build the foundation of the school and the Civil Affairs Team, Cat-A, will build the rest. Tentatively, the school should be finished in two to three months.



*Jabel o Saraj's future school's sign was unveiled by Pritchett.*

It was Zayher's grandfather's dream to see a clinic and school built here. Although, his grandfather did not live to see it, Zayher is making that dream a reality.

This reality can be credited to Pritchett, who has earned the respect of the Afghans due to his attitude and honesty, said Sayed Habib Abedi, Pritchett's advisor and interpreter.

This is the first time a building has been named after a foreigner in this country, according to Abedi. Afghanistan is a country that thrives on the knowledge of their religion.

"They clearly send you a message that this school was made by the U.S. and named after Col. Pritchett. But usually they don't do it, especially after a foreigner and especially a soldier. It means they have the highest, greatest respect for this man," added the interpreter about the man the Afghans call 'King Pritchett.'

It has been almost a year since the "king's" arrival. He has proven his goal's success with the accomplishment of this partnership project.

In the future, Afghans will see the sign and see that Americans built it and this will help build camaraderie between the two nations, said Abedi.

"Bagram is the center of gravity. If things are going well here, it will go well all over the country."



*The corner stone of Jabel o Saraj's school was started here Sunday when Afghans and Americans began working together in a partnership project.*

Pritchett's time is up as base commander, but he leaves his replacement, Col. Kurt A. McNeely, with a country filled with accomplishments.

After a year of jumping through legal hurdles, trying to persuade the locals to build their country and educating them on why the Americans are here, Pritchett leaves the Afghans sad about his departure, said Abedi.

Similar projects are currently being worked on. Pashtun Commander Asil Kahan of Sayed, right outside of Bagram, offered to pay 15 percent of cost on paving the road between the two locations.

The country can hope to see the "king" again one day. He said when he returns in 2004 to see the progress of the reconstructing nation; he hopes to see the once-none-existing school filled with children.



Photo by Pfc. Christina Carde

A soldier from B Company, 527<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion, Ruston, La., smoothes out the foundation for the new Post Exchange parking lot.

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"This is currently still considered a temporary base which is only designed to be operational for up to two years," said Blancaflor. "This is why the roads and walkways still consist of non-permanent substances such as rocks and gravel."

Another problem with using asphalt in a deployed theatre is lack of resources.

"The closest asphalt plant to the air base is in Kabul," said Blancaflor.

"Asphalt must be maintained at a certain temperature to be serviceable. By the time it gets here from Kabul will be too cold and can't be used," he added.

Blancaflor said that hopefully lack of resources will soon no longer be a problem.

"Once an asphalt plant is built here on Bagram, we will no longer need it from outside sources. This will lead to paved roads, parking lots, driveways and other project enhancements that will add to the overall beautification of the base."

## Bagram Air Base MWR presents

1530Z at the MWR building: "Boiler Room." A morally decent college dropout finds himself at conflict with his harsh federal judge father. He gets a job as a stock broker and gets on the fast track to success. Only things take a turn for the worst when he learns that his job isn't what's it cracked up to be. Tomorrow's movie will be "Jeremiah Johnson."



## Local weather

### TWO-DAY REGIONAL WEATHER FORECAST:

	Today	Tuesday
<b>Bagram:</b>	Dust H: 48F L: 28F	Dust H: 52F L: 27F
<b>Kandahar:</b>	Dust H: 66F L: 43F	Mostly cloudy H: 66F L: 41F
<b>Kabul:</b>	Dust H: 50F L: 27F	Fog H: 54F L: 28F
<b>Uzbekistan:</b>	Fog H: 48F L: 34F	Partly cloudy H: 55F L: 35F

Weather forecast courtesy of the Bagram Combat Weather Team

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# Coalition Sports Zone

*Soccer/European football* (Compiled from ESPN.com)



*Leeds United was left hanging Sunday.*

## Leeds upset in Cup quarterfinals

**SHEFFIELD, England** — Sheffield United upset Leeds United 1-0 and was joined in the FA Cup semifinals by fellow first division Watford and Premier League Southampton on Sunday.

Southampton ensured there would be 50 percent representation from the top flight in Monday's last-four draw by beating first division Wolverhampton Wanderers 2-0 as all three home sides won the Sunday quarterfinal ties.

Holder Arsenal was held 2-2 by Chelsea in an all-Premier League tie between last year's finalists at Highbury on Saturday and faces a replay at Stamford Bridge on March 25.

Watford beat fellow first division Burnley 2-0 at Vicarage Road to reach the last four for the fourth time, the last occasion being in 1987.

Playmaker Chris Marsden put Saints ahead in the 56<sup>th</sup> minute with an overhead kick from a corner, the ball sailing past goalkeeper Matt Murray who appeared to be distracted by striker James Beattie's effort to get a touch.

"I don't care how they go in. Today it was all about winning," said Marsden, a 34-year-old former Wolves player.

"We've been working on corners in training because the boss (Gordon Strachan) has been complaining we don't score (from them), so I hopefully booted it back into the danger area and luckily for me it sneaked in."

Southampton went two up when Wolves captain Paul Butler put the ball in his own net in the 81<sup>st</sup> minute after a teasing cross from the right by substitute Jo Tessem.

"We didn't underestimate Wolves. They're a big club, there's that many premiership teams gone out so we kept focused, kept working hard and believed in ourselves," said Saints' man of the match Brett Ormerod.

## Adu helps U.S. win qualifying group

**GUATEMALA CITY** — The United States got one goal from 13-year-old Freddy Adu and beat Guatemala 3-0 Sunday to win its qualifying group and advance to the FIFA Under-17 World Championship.

John DiRaimondo opened the scoring in the 42<sup>nd</sup> minute and Adu made it 2-0 in the 70<sup>th</sup>. Jamie Watson added the last goal in the 88<sup>th</sup> minute.

The United States has seven points in CONCACAF's Group A. Previously, the United States defeated Jamaica and Guatemala and tied El Salvador. The United States advances to the FIFA championship in Finland in August.

Adu was born in Ghana and became a U.S. citizen last month. Against Jamaica, he became the youngest player for a U.S. national team.

El Salvador and Jamaica played to a 1-1 tie earlier Sunday. Jamaica finished second with four points and will play the second-place finisher in Group B, with the winner moving on to the championship tournament.

El Salvador finished third in the field with three points and host Guatemala managed just one point.

## Real Sociedad one point off Real Madrid

**MADRID** — Real Sociedad reasserted its title credentials as it roared back to form with an impressive 3-1 home win over a demoralized Alaves in the first division on Sunday.

Turkish winger Nihat Kahveci, who missed last week's 3-0 defeat at Valladolid, was the catalyst to the Sociedad revival, when he carved open the Alaves defense to set up Darko Kovacevic for his side's first goal on 17 minutes.

He then added the finishing touch to score a superbly-fashioned second a little more than 20 minutes later and Russian midfielder Valery Karpin set Sociedad on its way to a comfortable win with another goal before the first half was out.

The result means that the Basque side reclaim second spot from Deportivo Coruna and is now just a point behind leader Real Madrid, which strolled to a 4-1 win over Racing Santander on Saturday.

Real heads the table with 51 points from 25 matches, Sociedad follow on 50 and Deportivo, which beat Villarreal 2-1 on Saturday, have 48. Valencia lost ground on the leading trio after it slipped to a 1-0 defeat at home to Atletico Madrid and is a further two points behind the Galicians in fourth.

But the defending champion has a comfortable eight-point advantage over fifth-place Celta Vigo, which suffered a shock 1-0 defeat at lowly Rayo Vallecano on Sunday.

Argentine winger Ariel Ibagaza inspired Real Mallorca to its first win in eight league matches on Sunday as he helped orchestrate a 2-1 victory over a disappointing Real Betis, which has now lost five out of its last six games.

The pocket-sized midfielder, who was impressive throughout, earned his side its opening penalty and supplied the cross for its

## SPORTS, from Page 6

second to seal a vital win that keeps it clear of the danger zone.

Alaves, anxious to restore its wounded pride after conceding 11 goals in its last two league games, was the first to threaten against Basque rival Sociedad at Anoeta.

### PSG earns rare win at Marseille

**MARSEILLE, France** — A fine performance from Ronaldinho inspired Paris St. Germain to an emphatic 3-0 victory over Olympique Marseille in the French first division on Sunday, its third win over its archrivals this season.

Marseille went behind to a Jerome Leroy goal in the 26<sup>th</sup> minute before Ronaldinho made it two in the 55<sup>th</sup> minute and set up Leroy again for the third seven minutes from time.

The defeat, its first at home against PSG in 15 years, was all the more painful for Marseille as it would have moved back to the top of the league, three points clear of Monaco, had it won.

The principality team lost 1-0 at home to Girondins Bordeaux on Saturday.

Both teams are tied on 52 points, with Monaco ahead on goal difference, while PSG moves up to sixth, seven points adrift.

"We can't beat PSG this season," said Marseille manager Alain Perrin.

"This goes to show motivation is not enough to win a game especially when you hand goals to your opponents.

"Fernandao's injury was another sad fixture of this nightmare night," he said.

Marseille's Brazilian striker was forced out in the fifth minute

after a collision with Argentine defender Gabriel Heinze. He was sent to hospital with concussion.

PSG had also beaten Marseille 3-0 in the league and 2-1 in the French Cup earlier this season.

Leroy's first goal, an unexpected shot from the right-hand corner of the box, was a deserved reward for PSG's tactical dominance in the first half.

Perrin said before the game he had a plan to counter Ronaldinho, but it did not show on the pitch as the Brazilian international shone throughout.

### Elber leads Bayern Munich's shutout

**BERLIN** — Brazilian striker Elber inspired Bayern Munich to a 3-0 victory over Bayer Leverkusen on Saturday that sent the run-away Bundesliga leaders 13 points clear.

Elber, who had scored twice in a 3-1 win over the same opponents on Wednesday for a place in the German Cup final, kept Bayern on course for a domestic double with two more goals.

Peru forward Claudio Pizarro showed the Munich club the way with an early effort and Elber did the rest by scoring in each half.

Champions Borussia Dortmund remained second but dropped further back with a 1-0 defeat at lowly Borussia Moenchengladbach for whom Finland forward Mikael Forssell scored the winner with a header on 63 minutes.

Bayern, reduced to chasing domestic silverware since bowing out of Europe, paid a high price for the victory, Germany playmaker Michael Ballack leaving the pitch after 22 minutes with an ankle injury that could sideline him for several weeks.

## NIBBIO, from Page 3



Photo by Maj. William Mott

*Cpl. Maj. Paola Lenardon, parachutist, Monte Cervino Battalion, 9<sup>th</sup> Alpini Regiment, was the first woman to join the Italian Army two-and-a-half years ago.*

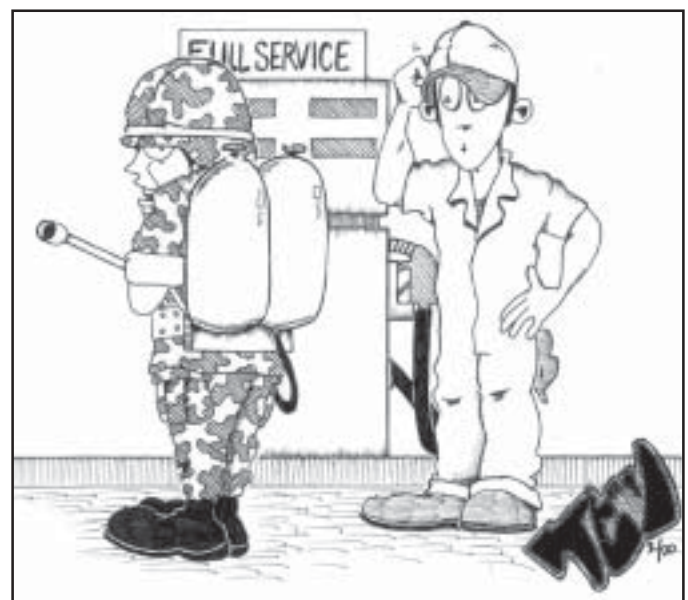
ploy to Salerno in support of OEF," said Battisti.

The Alpini belong to the 9<sup>th</sup> Regiment of the Taurinense brigade. After months of intense training that included nuclear, biological and chemical tasks they deployed with the latest military technology for night vision and global positioning to execute their mission in the War on Terror with precision.

sion.

"We are happy to be integrated into the international coalition against terror led by the U.S., who have been our allies for more than 60 years, having freed our country and restored democracy and freedom; we come to do the same for Afghanistan," said Battisti.

### "Fill 'er up, mac."



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By Kevin Kilgore

## Laugh Support